

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. <sup>P6</sup> 86A-47

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Harper Tobacco Barn

other

### 2. Location

street and number 9500 Croom Road not for publication

city, town Upper Marlboro vicinity

county Prince George's

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mary A. M. Harper Living Revocable Trust

street and number 9500 Croom Road telephone

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD zip code 20772-7898

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. liber folio

city, town tax map 119E4 tax parcel tax ID number

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
- ☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- ☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
- ☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Current Function                        |   | Resource Count   |                 |
|---|---|---|---|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape          | Contributing   | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture |  | buildings       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> defense        | <input type="checkbox"/> religion           |  | sites           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> domestic       | <input type="checkbox"/> social             |  | structures      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |   | <input type="checkbox"/> education      | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation     |  | objects         |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary       | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress   |  | Total           |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> government     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unknown | Number of Contributing Resources<br>previously listed in the Inventory |                 |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> health care    | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use  |  |                 |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> industry       | <input type="checkbox"/> other:             |  |                 |

## 7. Description

PG:  
Inventory No. 86A-47

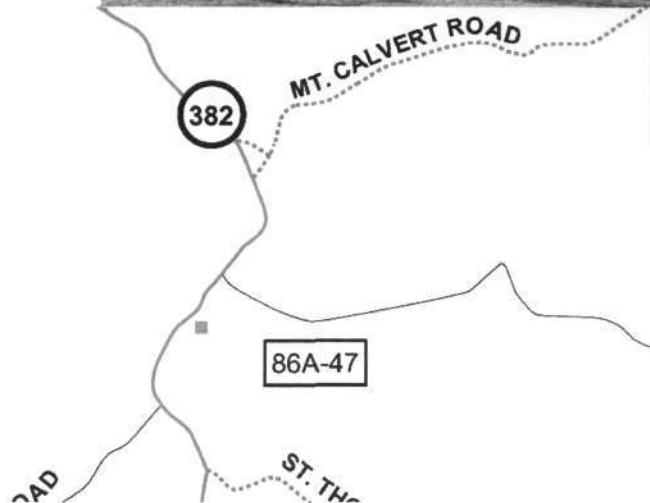
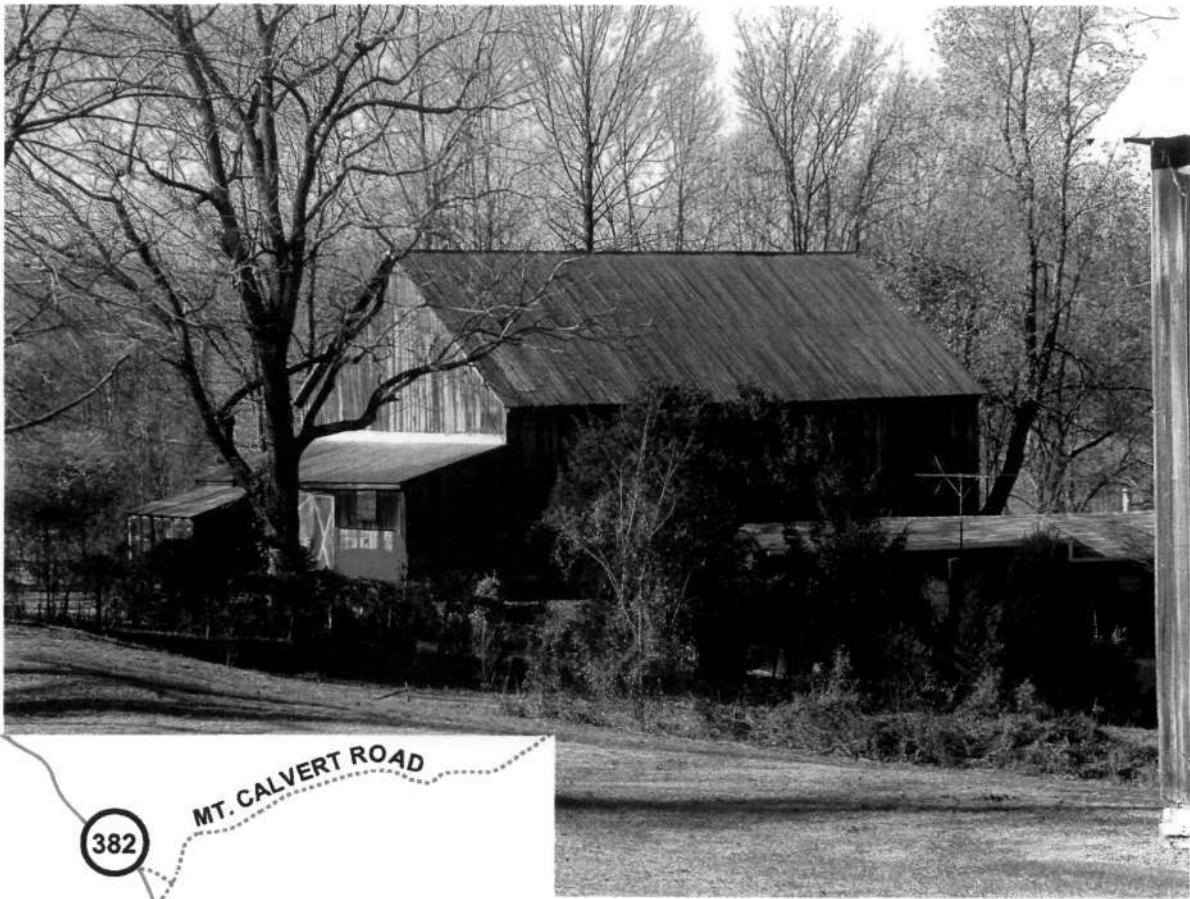
### Condition

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> altered      |

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Built circa 1900, this barn is sited near other buildings including a dwelling. The barn has a wood frame structural system clad with vertical boards with a gable roof of standing-seam metal. There is a shed roof addition on the gable end. A house or mobile home is situated almost immediately adjacent to the barn and there is another outbuilding on the opposite side of the barn.

Access to the interior of the barn was not granted. Tobacco is no longer being cultivated on any land associated with this barn.



UPPER Marlboro Quad

## 8. Significance

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| Period  | Areas of Significance                           | Check and justify below                               |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics                    | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine        | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology             | <input type="checkbox"/> education                    | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899            | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/<br>recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000-                | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage              | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/<br>settlement   | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> social history      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning     |   | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime history       | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation           |   | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____        |

Specific dates      c. 1900      Architect/Builder      Unknown

Construction dates      c. 1900

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register      ☐ Maryland Register      ☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

During the more than two centuries in which tobacco served as the money crop in Prince George's County, planters, indentured servants, slaves, and farmers developed utilitarian structures for tobacco curing and packing that have remained essentially the same to the present day. Early barns were square in plan and constructed of notched logs with open spaces between the logs to permit the circulation of air (a log dwelling had chinking and caulking between the logs to prevent the infiltration of air). Inside, scaffolding held the tobacco sticks with the leaves suspended from them in such a way as to allow air to flow over the drying tobacco to prevent mold. Farmers employing the fire-curing method lit small fires on the barn's earthen floor to lower the relative humidity (Percy 1979:33). The Prince George's County barns differed from those constructed in Virginia and North Carolina for the flue curing of bright-leaf tobacco, which employed a stove or firebox with a flue and require a different type of barn—one that was essentially airtight to hold the heat. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the increasing availability of sawn lumber enabled southern Maryland's farmers to construct timber-frame tobacco barns covered with wooden siding, usually vertical board siding. Southern Maryland's air cured tobacco utilized barns constructed with air doors along the sides that could be opened to facilitate the circulation of air. These air doors were three or four vertical boards fastened together and usually hinged that could be opened.

The earliest tobacco barns identified in the survey along Croom Road are the ca. 1820 Duvall Tobacco Barn (87A-31) and the 1800-1830 Watson Tobacco Barn (87A-55) and the most recent barns date to the middle of the twentieth century such as the Stielper (87A-48), Jackson (87A-47), and Chase (87A-44) tobacco barns. Although the dates of construction for the surveyed barns range over one hundred and thirty years, the construction materials, methods of construction, and form of the tobacco barn changed very little. All of the barns surveyed are wood-frame and clad in vertical boards; all of the barns contain four-foot by four-foot rooms to hang the tobacco; and all of the barns have hinged vertical board air doors to control the circulation of air within the barns. The changes in form are very minor but provide the most insight into the date of construction. Early nineteenth century barns have steeply pitched gable roofs. From about 1830 until 1900 the barns have more standardized gable roofs, sometimes with one side of the gable extended to create a shed roof over a stripping room. Around 1900, the use of tractors increased in Prince George's County and central double-leaf doors opening onto a wide central passage began to appear in the barn. The final form change was the advent of the gambrel roof, which created more space within the barn to hang tobacco. Gambrel roofs begin to appear in the 1930s and 1940s.

The Harper Tobacco Barn is significant as an example of a ca. 1900 tobacco barn in Prince George's County. The form of the barn with its size and particularly the gable roof are indicative of the barns built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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David O. Percy, *The Production of Tobacco Along the Colonial Potomac. The National Colonial Farm Research Report No. 1, Agricultural History Series* (Accokeek, Md.: The Accokeek Foundation, 1979), 10–11.]

National Register of Historic Places, Red Fox Farm, Mecklenburg Co., Va., File 58-131, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

Calvert County Historic District Commission, "Tobacco Barns Calvert County Maryland," Prince Frederick, Md: Calvert County Historic District Commission, 1991), brochure.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property \_\_\_\_\_

Acreage of historical setting \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale: Upper Marlboro

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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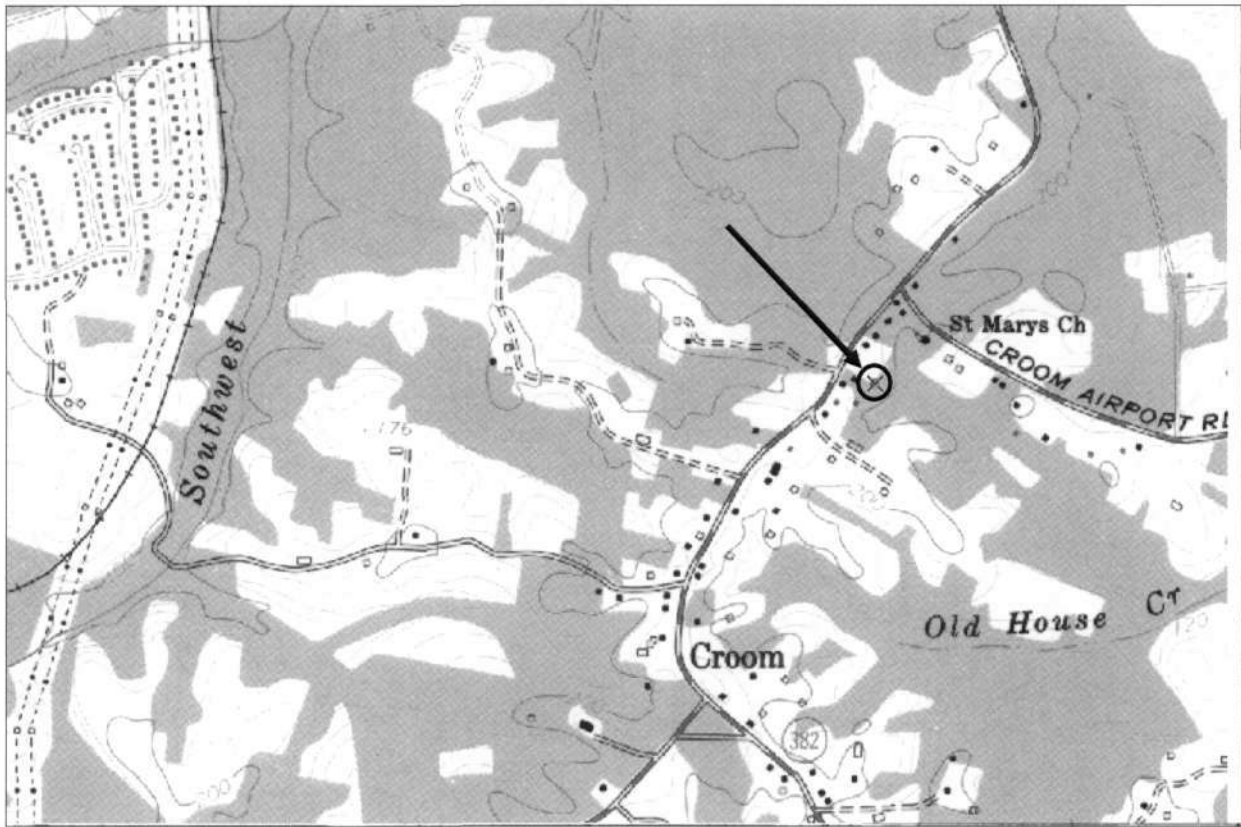
|                 |                                      |           |               |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| name/title      | J. Shafagoj, Architectural Historian |           |               |
| organization    | Ashley Neville, LLC                  | date      | April 2, 2007 |
| street & number | 11311 Cedar Lane                     | telephone | 804.798.2124  |
| city or town    | Glen Allen                           | state     | VA            |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

PG:86A-47  
Harper Tobacco Barn  
9500 Croom Road, Upper Marlboro  
Upper Marlboro Quad



Tax Map 119, Plat A-8782, Lot 8

